



MITIGATED DETERMINATION OF NONSIGNIFICANCE

Description of proposal:

Dragon's Back Sorts Timber Sale, application # 30-076292, and attached forest practice application #2606461 is a 206 net acre even-aged regeneration harvest. The units are located in Sections 16 and 27 of Township 29 North, Range 1 West, W.M. and Sections 13 and 24 of Township 30 North Range 2 West, W.M., in Jefferson County. An estimated 6,225 mbf of timber will be removed from the units. There will be 2,908 feet of reconstructed roads, 10,061 feet of new road construction and 1.94 miles of road maintenance. Initial planning identified 248 acres of land for the potential timber harvest but sale reconnaissance identified 34 acres of the proposal will be managed for environmental protection rather than timber harvest.

Description of mitigation:

The Dragon's Back Sorts timber sale proposal has implemented measures to mitigate adverse impacts to the environment. The following exclusions were made for this purpose: eight acres for leave trees, thirty acres for stream and wetland protection and four acres in unstable slope protection. Leave tree clump acreage is included in the proposal acreage while water protection and unstable slope acreage has been deducted.

Unit 1 has no typed water. Unit 2 has a 1.17 acre wetland centrally located in the unit that was given an average 150 foot site index buffer. The wetland buffer is an average 150 feet because on the west side of the wetland the buffer was shortened to 50 feet and lengthened on the north to 250 feet to allow for cable corridors. The wetland buffer will not be thinned since the current basal area is near 120. A Type 5 stream drains the wetland to the east and feeds into a Type 4 stream that divides Units 2 and 3. There is also a Type 4 along the north, and both streams were given a 100 foot buffer. The Type 4 stream to the north has two less than ¼ acre forested wetland associated, the forested wetlands are outside of the 100 foot stream buffer and have leave trees along the perimeter.

Unit 3 has a Type A wetland to the north on private property, but is close enough to have a 150 foot site index buffer applied to the very northeast boundary. Flowing from this Type A wetland is a Type 4 stream that parallels the north boundary. Within this Type 4 buffer tailholing may occur. In the eastern portion of the unit a Type 5 bisects the sale and feeds into another Type 5 stream. There will be a maximum of four yarding corridors through the Riparian Management Zone (RMZ) that divides Units 2 and 3, these corridors will be 10 foot maximum width and any trees needing cut will be left in the corridor. Waters from Units 2 and 3 are tributary to Discovery Bay.

Unit 4 has no typed streams associated with the sale area but does have two less than a ¼ acre forested wetlands in the southwest portion. The two small wetlands were close enough together that they could be left as one leave tree clump.

Unit 1 has 380 individually painted trees and 81 trees in three clumps. The individual trees are residual old growth and second growth left for visual mitigation along the two county roads within and adjacent to the sale area. Unit 2 has 57 individually painted trees and 246 trees in six clumps. Unit 3 has 70 individually painted trees and 470 in six clumps. The leave clumps in these units were left as protection for non-required water resources and some visual mitigation. The individuals are residual old growth and structurally unique trees. Unit 4 has 112 individually painted trees and 321 in ten clumps.

The leave tree clumps in this unit were left along the county road as visual mitigation and protection of sensitive areas. Individually marked leave trees were selected to represent the dominant size and crown class, and/or to capture unique structure. An effort was made to identify and select all older residual trees. Snags that can be safely left standing will remain. A down log component will also be provided by requiring all trees down for five years or more be left undisturbed. These legacy trees and reserve trees will help to provide future multi-layered canopies and general habitat diversity. They will also help to reduce the visual impacts from regeneration harvests.

Unstable slopes were identified in the drainage between Units 2 and 3. Most of the unstable areas fell within the RMZ, so are excluded, but in the northeast portion of Unit 2 a relict deep-seated landslide is included in the harvest area. The DNR geologist visited the area and found the deep-seated landslide relict with no evidence suggesting that timber harvest would adversely impact the stability.

Both Unit 1 and Unit 4 have eagle nests in the vicinity. Near Unit 1, the nest is 1700 feet due west from the unit boundary. Unit 4 has two eagle nests next to the sale area, one is due south 800 feet, and the other is due west 1000 feet from the unit boundaries. Given the distances from the actual nest trees no timing restrictions are necessary. This sale is not in reclassified marbled murrelet habitat. Nor is it within a spotted owl circle. HCP policy for green tree retention should provide future nesting and roosting trees.

In Unit 1 hazard abatement will occur within 100 feet of the two county roads and within 200 feet of the residence in the northeast corner. Unit 4 also has hazard abatement along the county road and in the southwest corner along a residence.

Within the sale area an archeology significant trash deposit was found. The DNR's archeologist visited and documented the site.

Proponent: Department of Natural Resources – Olympic Region

Location of proposal, including street address, if any:

Lead agency: Department of Natural Resources

The lead agency for this proposal has determined that it does not have a probable significant adverse impact on the environment. An environmental impact statement (EIS) is not required under RCW 43.21C.030(2)(c). This decision was made after review of a completed environmental checklist and other information on file with the lead agency. This information is available to the public on request.

☐ **There is no comment period for this Mitigated DNS.**

☒ **This MDNS is issued under 197-11-340(2); the lead agency will not act on this proposal for 14 days from December 17, 2004. Comments must be submitted by January 3, 2005.**

Responsible official: Charlie Cortelyou

Position/title: Region Manager

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Address:

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Date _____

Signature _____